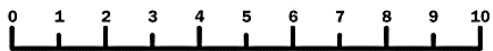


Real Faith Works: The Power of Words


James 3:1-18(NIV)




On balance, how important are your words? ¹

- the uncontrolled tongue is a symptom of the “fake faith virus” ²

1. Our Tongue is Disproportionately Influential (vv. 1-6)

 warning to our teachers (1) ³



 warning to us all (2-6)

Our tongues can...

measure our maturity (2)

determine our direction (3-4)



set ablaze our sin (5-6) ⁴



2. Our Tongue is Humanly Untameable (vv. 7-8)

- what we can tame (7)
- what we can't tame (8)

3. Our Tongue is Unnaturally Inconsistent (vv. 9-12)

- inconsistent (9-10)
- unnatural (11-12) ⁵



4. Our Tongue is a Revealing Giveaway (vv. 13-18)

- earthly wisdom (14-16)
- heavenly wisdom (13, 17-18)
 - o if our words justify us? ⁶
 - o if our words condemn us? ⁷

THE POWER OF WORDS

A careless word may kindle strife;

A cruel word may wreck a life.

A bitter word may hate instill;

A brutal word may smite and kill.

A gracious word may smooth the way;

A joyous word may light the day.

A timely word may lessen stress;

A loving word may heal and bless. ⁸

⁵ In Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus also used the tree analogy to distinguish between true and fake prophets.

⁶ Proverbs 18:21; Psalm 141:3

⁷ Matthew 12:33-35; James 1:18

⁸ Author Unknown



Starter Questions:

1. Has anything you heard today especially gripped you? What and Why?
2. Can you think of any news reports or current events that confirm James' teaching on the tongue?
3. Read the “Power of Words” poem (above); how do you see the evidence of God's grace in your life?
4. How do Proverbs 10:8, 19; 15:1 and 18:2 inform the way you use social media/email/texting?
5. What is your approach when someone starts to share a juicy bit of gossip with you?
6. Watch the 5 min. video parable of James 3:9 (<https://tinyurl.com/ybfdsvxu>); can you spot any inconsistencies in the use of your own tongue?

¹ Matthew 12:37

² In James 1:26, the uncontrolled tongue is symptomatic of self-deceived, worthless religion (“the fake faith virus”).

³ Matthew 5:19

⁴ Gems from the treasure box of Proverbs on the tongue include: 10:8, 18; 12:18-19; 13:3; 16:27-28; 18:6-7; 19:9; 26:20-21, 28.